

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

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INFO AMEMBASSY BONN PRIORITY

CINCEUR FOR POLAD & OPS PRIORITY

CINCUSAREUR FOR POLAD, OPS & AEAGG-OCO PRIORITY

CINCUSAFE FOR POLAD & OPS PRIORITY

USEMLO PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

USMISSION NATO

C O N F I D E N T I A L BERLIN 166

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PGOV, MOPS, WB, GE

SUBJECT: SPECIAL GDR CONTROLS ON TRANSIT ROUTES

REF: BERLIN 156, BERLIN 160

1. SPECIAL EAST GERMAN CONTROLS JAN 26 ON TRANSIT
ROUTES DREW SHARP REACTIONS FROM GOVERNING MAYOR SCHUETZ
AND WEST BERLIN POLITICAL LEADERS. SCHUETZ TOLD PRESS
"THE INCIDENTS ON TRANSIT ROUTES MUST BE TAKEN
SERIOUSLY, BUT IF SOMEONE IN THE GDR LEADERSHIP
ACTED IRRATIONALLY IT WAS NOT NECESSARY FOR US TO ACT
IN THE SAME WAY.... HOWEVER, THE SENAT AND FEDERAL
GOVERNMENT COULD NOT PERMIT THAT THERE BE ANY DOUBT
ABOUT THE CENTRAL CORE OF THE QA, THE TRANSIT AGREEMENT."
BOTH CDU AND FDP FRAKTION LEADERS CHARGED THAT
ACTIONS WERE IN VIOLATION OF QA, AND CDU FRAKTION
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LEADER LUMMER CALLED FOR MEETING OF QA SIGNATORIES.

2. PRIVATELY, SENAT OFFICIALS EXPRESSED SERIOUS CONCERN OVER POSSIBILITY THAT GDR ACTIONS MIGHT BE FIRST STEP OF GDR RESPONSE TO ESTABLISHMENT, FRG ENVIRONMENT OFFICE IN BERLIN. HOWEVER, WHEN GDR WITHDREW SPECIAL CONTROLS BY SUNDAY, JAN 27, OFFICIALS WERE SOMEWHAT RELAXED. SENAT CHANCELLERY DIRECTOR HERZ TOLD MISSION OFFICER JAN 28 THAT BRANDT AND SCHUETZ AGREED AT JAN 27 MEETING

IN BERLIN (BRANDT WAS ON PRIVATE VISIT) TO KEEP EYE ON SITUATION AND SEEK INFORMATION THROUGH TRANSIT AGREEMENT COMMISSION, AS WELL AS OTHER CHANNELS, ABOUT GDR MOTIVATION. HERZ ASKED THAT ALLIES ALSO SEEK INFORMATION FROM SOVIETS ABOUT REASONS BEHIND GDR ACTIONS.

3. IN MONDAY'S EDITORIALS, SPRINGER PRESS CITED GDR ACTIONS AS INDICATION THAT BRANDT'S OSTPOLITIK HAD FAILED, AND PRO-SPD SPANDAUER VOLKSBLATT CALLED DIFFICULTIES TEST FOR QA.

4. POLICE HAVE BEEN INFORMED BY WEST BERLINER WHO VISITED HALLE OVER WEEKEND THAT HIS BROTHER-IN-LAW, WHO HAS CONNECTIONS IN NVA, SAID THAT CONTROLS WERE ESTABLISHED IN CONNECTION WITH SEARCH FOR TWO EAST GERMAN SOLDIERS, WHO DESERTED WITH MACHINE PISTOLS AND AMMUNITION. WHILE WE CANNOT EVALUATE ACCURACY OF THIS REPORT, PATTERN OF GDR ACTIVITY WAS CONSISTENT WITH SEARCH FOR ARMED FUGITIVES.

5. BRITISH ARE PROTESTING TO SOVIETS AT CHECKPOINT ALPHA DELAYS TO THEIR TWO TRAVELLERS JANUARY 26

6 COMMENT: INASMUCH AS EAST GERMANS CANNOT BE EXPECTED TO ISSUE PRESS RELEASE ON MOTIVATION FOR MASSIVE SEARCH OPERATION, IT IS UNLIKELY THAT WE WILL RECEIVE STRAIGHT ACCOUNT AS TO THEIR MOTIVATIONS. THERE ARE* SUFFICIENT INDICATORS TO SUGGEST MOST PROBABLE OBJECTIVE WAS SEARCH FOR ONE OR MORE PERSONS BELIEVED TO BE DANGEROUS. IT WAS, HOWEVER, INEVITABLE THAT EVENTS WOULD BE CONFIDENTIAL

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LINKED IN PUBLIC MIND WITH THREATS AGAINST ESTABLISHMENT OF FEDERAL ENVIRONMENT AGENCY IN BERLIN (AND FEDERAL PRESENCE IN GENERAL), AND EVEN IF GDR DID NOT STAGE ITS ASSERTION OF AUTHORITY ON AUTOBAHN FOR THIS PURPOSE, IT MAY WELL SEE IMPRESSION TO THIS EFFECT AS WINDFALL BENEFIT, WHICH IT IS PROBABLY NOT UNHAPPY TO HAVE GET AROUND. OVERREACTION BY WEST BERLINERS AND WEST GERMANS, WHICH WE HAVE ATTEMPTED TO CHECK IN OUR PRIVATE CONVERSATIONS, HAS TENDED TO PLAY INTO GDR HANDS. RISK,

AS ONE SPD LEADER PUT IT, IS THAT SOME CIRCLES MAY
NOW BE MOVED TO CONSIDER FURTHER CONCESSIONS IN REGARD
TO ENVIRONMENT AGENCY, WHICH COULD ONLY EXACERBATE
THIS ALREADY MUCH-CONFUSED AND CLUMSIL* HANDLED ISSUE.

7. USCOB CONCURS.KLEIN

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